

THE BLIND AMERICAN

INKPRINT EDITION

PUBLISHED BY THE AMERICAN BROTHERHOOD FOR THE BLIND
A CHARITABLE AND EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

2652 SHASTA ROAD BERKELEY 8, CALIF.

APRIL ISSUE ---- 1963

THE BLIND AMERICAN

Published monthly in Braille and inkprint and distributed free to the blind by the American Brotherhood for the Blind, Dr. Jacobus tenBroek, President. National headquarters and editorial offices at 2652 Shasta Road, Berkeley 8, California.

Editor: Floyd W. Matson

Executive Secretary: Anthony Mannino, 205 South Western Avenue, Room 206, Los Angeles 4, California.

THE BLIND AMERICAN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

BLIND AID SCANDAL IN INDIANA -----	1
<u>LOOK'S</u> GRIM VIEW OF WELFARE -----	2
FATHER SUTCLIFFE: A BROTHER TO OTHERS -----	5
By Anthony G. Mannino	
A RESOLUTION ON EMPLOYMENT OF HANDICAPPED -----	9
MEET THE BLIND WHO LEAD THE BLIND -----	10
A CONSTRUCTIVE DISSENT -----	14
By Dr. Floyd W. Matson	
THE HANDICAPPED IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE -----	17
By K. Vernon Banta	
MICHIGAN SEMINAR FOR BLIND TUNERS -----	21
By Stanley Oliver	
BROTHERS . . . & OTHERS -----	23



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2010 with funding from
National Federation of the Blind (NFB)

<http://www.archive.org/details/blindamericanapr34amer>

BLIND AID SCANDAL IN INDIANA

Widespread defiance among Indiana counties of minimum standards governing the Aid to the Blind program has been alleged by representatives of the organized blind and all but admitted by a ranking official of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

In a recent exchange of letters the Washington office chief of the National Federation of the Blind, John F. Nagle, advised federal administrators of information received from numerous blind Indianans to the effect that "needs standards are determined in accordance with county 'poor relief' standards and that since these standards vary from county to county, blind-aid grants vary accordingly."

He pointed out that such practice clearly violates the requirement that "a state plan for blind aid must be approved by the federal government, and must have equal force and application throughout an entire state."

Urging that the Department of HEW take immediate action to eliminate these inequities "which are causing grievous hardship to needy blind people," Nagle concluded his letter with the observation:

"Perhaps Indiana's average blind-aid payment of \$59.16 -- \$10.16 below the national average -- which at best can only provide a very marginal living to blind-aid recipients, is explained by the dominance of the county 'poor relief' standards in Indiana's federally-supported blind-aid program, and the failure of the state welfare agency to enforce and give statewide effect to its federally-approved blind-aid plan."

In reply to Nagle's letter, Assistant HEW Secretary Wilbur J. Cohen in effect conceded that Indiana had failed to maintain uniform aid standards, and indicated that necessary "corrective action" would be taken. The partial text of Cohen's letter follows:

"You are correct in your understanding that the provisions of the Social Security Act require statewide equitable administration of the aid to the blind program based on standards and policies uniformly applied throughout the State. The Indiana approved State plan for the administration of aid to the blind contains the standards of assistance which are to be used in determining need and the amount of payment in that program. There is no provision in the plan for the use of county 'poor relief' standards.

"As you may know, Indiana is one of the States where there has been a strong tradition of local administration. While progressive improvement has been made, it has been slower than many States in really having the uniform standards provided by its State plan.

"We have asked the Bureau of Family Services representative in our Chicago office to inquire into this situation and to request the Indiana State Department of Public Welfare to take any corrective action necessary to bring practice in line with the State plan."

LOOK'S GRIM VIEW OF WELFARE

It's still the Old LOOK . . .

LOOK Magazine, which a year and a half ago turned its anguished gaze upon "the scandal of welfare chiseling" -- and left the impression that our national programs of social security are nothing but a monumental boondoggle (see THE BLIND AMERICAN, November, 1961) -- has done it again.

Its issue of March 26, 1963, features a kindred article, "The Grim State of Welfare," calculated to shock the uninformed reader and to reduce the vastly complicated issues of welfare programing to the sensational black-and-white of journalistic "exposure."

Author of this documentary nightmare is Julius Horwitz, described by the magazine as a "consultant on public welfare to the New York State Senate Majority Leader." What is not indicated is that the majority leader in question is none other than State Senator John Wise, whose wildly irrational scattergun attacks upon every significant public welfare principle enacted in the last half-century place him somewhat to the right of Queen Elizabeth the First. (For an extended commentary on his position, see "The Attack on Welfare: A Case Study," THE BLIND AMERICAN, September, 1962.)

Consultant Horwitz, a sometime novelist and onetime social worker, now proves able to outshine his master at the arts of old-fashioned melodrama. His article, concerned principally with the

welfare programs of New York City, notes that some nine thousand employees work for the city's Department of Public Welfare. "Many of the social-service workers are in the process of resigning; the conflict between the utopian aims of New York State's Social Welfare Law and the realities they face daily in their territories has left them shattered and helpless."

What are these "utopian aims" of the state welfare law? It is, says Horwitz, "a marvelously conceived document that spells out the American dream of total security. It charges the state with complete responsibility for all the needs of life, excepting Golden Books for children and contraceptive information for adults."

That passage strikes the clever note which characterizes much of the article -- one of heavy-handed ridicule and hardly disguised contempt for the public undertaking of welfare, interspersed with flashes of a curious "moral" indignation. For Author Horwitz wishes to have his cake and eat it too; his article seeks to condemn the welfare programers both for doing too much and for not doing enough. He contrives somehow to give the impression of pleading humanely for the needy and underprivileged while savagely biting the hand that aids them.

"For many of the aged, the disabled and the unemployed," he declares, "public assistance is an immediate alternative to catastrophe. But what happens to the lives of tens of thousands of children, the aged and the disabled is so contrary to the law that the 'dream of security' becomes a terrifying nightmare. And as long as inexhaustible funds are available to house children -- if house is the word -- to spoon-feed the aged into canvas mortuary sacks, to prop up the disabled and to file away the unemployed, 360,000 human beings will continue to be paraded as statistical icons by the Department of Welfare."

And why is this the case? "Because the Department of Welfare has not dared to admit, publicly and with candor, the enormity of the social problems it faces, problems for which it assumed a fatuous and dangerous responsibility."

This is strong and bitter language, surely. But what does it mean? It means that the assumption by the city and state of New York of a responsibility to feed the needy aged, to "prop up" the disabled, and to assist its helpless and impoverished children -- that all of this is "fatuous and dangerous." It would seem that the welfare department has far too much responsibility and much too much money

("inexhaustible funds") -- and yet somehow has failed to face up to the enormous social problems it has to deal with. The conclusion can only be that the department would cope more effectively with its enormous problems if it had fewer funds and less responsibility. How this magical feat might be accomplished Horwitz does not, of course, divulge. His assignment is not to help in the solution of the problem but to attack those who are trying to solve it; to cast suspicion on their motives and aims, to undermine public confidence in the law and philosophy of welfare.

"How do you stop the institutionalized welfare slums?" asks Horwitz in mock horror. "...What do you do with welfare slums hidden in blocks of crumbling, hacked-up, emasculated apartment houses, when they are protected by the guilt and fear of the Department of Welfare?"

Nowhere does he answer his own questions. But the answer, on his terms, is not hard to make out. Senator Wise for one has stated it again and again, in the crystal-clear language of invective. What you must do is to cut off the "inexhaustible funds" of the guilty and fearful welfare department -- cut down its "shattered and helpless" staff of workers -- and cut out its utopian programs of assistance and rehabilitation, of job training and counseling, of psychiatric aid and family counseling. Stop spoon-feeding the indigent aged; let them forage for themselves or go under. Cease propping up the disabled; let the human chips fall where they may. As for ANC -- suffer not the little children to come unto you.

That is the way of true progress -- back to the golden (tax-free) age of the poor laws and the almshouse.

Do away altogether with the "fatuous and dangerous responsibility" of public welfare to assist the deprived and disadvantaged toward the "utopian" goal of self-support and self-care. Point an accusing finger not at the "enormity" and terrible complexity of the problems of human welfare -- problems not only of poverty but of conflicting mores and cultural maladjustment, of prejudice and public ignorance. Point rather, in righteous scorn and spurious anger, at the sadly unmannered and overworked rescue squadrons of welfare workers who are laboring to impose some minimum standards of decency and health -- and to salvage a modicum of order out of the social confusion which the attacks of the Majority Leader, and his imaginative assistant, are doing so much to perpetuate.

FATHER SUTCLIFFE: A BROTHER TO OTHERS

By Anthony G. Mannino

Last summer, in the course of a nation-wide lecture tour, Father Harry J. Sutcliffe, director of the Episcopal Guild for the Blind, spent several days in southern California fulfilling business and speaking engagements connected with his work. Even in the limited time of a most enjoyable afternoon visit at the Brotherhood office, we were deeply impressed by the magnetism of his personality, fine stature and obvious physical fitness. His understanding and knowledge of the needs of blind persons, and his keen insight and wisdom in the broad area of services to the blind, reveal a sincere interest in organizations of and for the blind. Answering a question asked by James B. Garfield, while a guest on Jim's radio show, Father Sutcliffe made this most pertinent observation:

"Creed must be manifested by deed; word must be manifested by work. Those of us who are blind live and hope for the day when people will think of us as, first of all, persons with courage, fears, aspirations and talent: think of us as active productive citizens in the community, brothers with you, brothers with every one in the great work of helping push this world nearer toward the time when we will be realizing the prophetic vision of nations no longer learning war, the time when swords will really be beaten into plow-shares."

Blind at birth in 1925, Father Sutcliffe grew up in Brooklyn, New York. At that time public school education for blind children was not what it is today, so when he reached school age the youngster was enrolled at the New York Institute for the Education of the Blind, a residential school. While there, he was not sensationally outstanding in his studies, nor does he claim any great record of achievements that might have singled him out from the other students. He modestly admits that he was asked to be the commencement speaker at the school this past summer, substituting for President Kennedy, who had to cancel the commitment.

At the age of thirteen the young student became interested in amateur radio, and by the time he was sixteen was a confirmed "ham" operator. He did a great deal of reading of technical material on the subject and studied under the expert teaching of Bob Gunderson, well-known teacher of the blind. During World War II there were fifteen or twenty amateur radio operators at the school, who worked for the

Radio Intelligence Division of the Federal Communications Commission, engaged in recording propaganda broadcasts. Young Sutcliffe also worked for the War Emergencies Radio Services of the Office of Civilian Defense of New York, covering telephone failures resulting from attack or other emergencies. For his participation in this important work he was awarded a citation by the late Fiorello LaGuardia, then Mayor of New York City.

Graduated from the New York Institute in 1944, Father Sutcliffe enrolled as a freshman at Wittenberg College in Springfield, Ohio. He was an excellent student at college and was soon recognized as a leader, both scholastically and in campus activities. His mind found interest in a wide range of subjects and languages -- with major concentration on history and political science. Asked why he later went into the ministry when it seemed that he was not actually preparing for it, he replies that these studies and experience provided an excellent foundation for the vocation he chose and the work he has done since.

In college class work, Father Sutcliffe recalls that he had to rely on his own ability to take braille notes to provide himself with study and theme material he might need later. Braille machines and recorders were as yet too cumbersome and noisy. He remembers that the clicking of his braille stylus in class soon became a signal for the other students to start taking notes also. It became something of a ritual for everyone to sit quietly listening to the professor's discourse until the Sutcliffe stylus began to click. Then the pens and pencils of the other members of the class would start writing.

Because of his high scholastic standing he was elected to many of the honorary societies. Among these were the German language Delta Phi Alpha, music honorary Phi Mu Alpha Symphonia, scholastic Phi Eta Sigma, national Blue Key honorary, political science Pi Sigma Alpha and romance language Phi Sigma Iota.

After four years of scholastic excellence, Father Sutcliffe was graduated from Wittenberg College in 1948. He had already decided upon the priesthood for his life's work, so the next school term found him on the student roll at Mt. Airy Seminary in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. In his seminary studies he specialized in exegetical theology, the study of sacred scriptures with Hebrew and Aramaic. He was graduated from Mt. Airy Seminary in 1951 with a Bachelor of Divinity degree, and was ordained a priest of the Episcopal Church the following year.

His first assignment was an Assyrian parish of the ancient

church in Chicago, where he served for two years on the staff of Assyrian Patriarchal Pro-Cathedral of Mar Sargis as director of religious education and youth work. He wrote a monograph entitled, "The Church of the East" -- a history of the doctrines, organization, customs and liturgical practices of this small but ancient body of Christendom which still worships in Aramaic. There followed other publications of historical material and research dealing with the lesser Eastern churches.

For some time the Episcopal Church had felt it should be doing more for its blind communicants by way of furnishing literature in braille and recorded form. Father Sutcliffe was asked to initiate a program for this purpose. This was the beginning of the Episcopal Guild for the Blind, a subdivision of the American Church Union, which is a missionary and educational organization of the Episcopal Church. With his personal knowledge of the needs of the blind, Father Sutcliffe began to build a program designed to provide brailled and recorded church literature. It was immediately obvious that it was going to be an expansive undertaking that would include other special services for blind persons -- one that would demand expert and efficient leadership. Father Sutcliffe was named director of the Episcopal Guild for the Blind, and before long found himself exploring available services and resources in given areas of work for the blind. Counseling of the highest caliber and case work with the personal interest of a devoted friend became a part of the Guild's function. As a result, in just a few years the Guild has grown to become a respected and valuable service organization.

Under the direction of this blind religious leader, other blind people are wisely and effectively guided into vocations of their own choosing. Educational aids are quietly being provided for those who need help in their endeavor to better themselves. It is because of Father Sutcliffe's experience and interest in the recording field that the Guild has been able to keep pace with the latest trends and techniques in this area of service to blind persons. At the present time preparations are being made to convert to any technical development that might be decided upon in the field of long-playing records and tape-recordings.

Despite Father Sutcliffe's varied responsibilities with the Episcopal Guild, he somehow finds time to lend his services to other organizations in projects in which he can provide valuable help. From his own office he serves as an instructor for the Hadley School for the Blind of Winnetka, Illinois, supervising the correspondence courses in Greek and Hebrew. In connection with the Hadley program, he is

at present rewriting the school's Bible survey course, with additional chapters on later developments such as the Dead Sea Scrolls and other archeological discoveries.

Sharing his mastery of the language with those who need it, he also teaches Hebrew and Hebrew braille at the Jewish Braille Institute in New York. He contributes time and effort in helping to resolve various social problems arising in the community, state and nation. In connection with the many phases of his work on behalf of his fellow man, Father Sutcliffe is in great demand as a speaker for the national organization of B'nai B'rith and the Anti-Defamation League.

On February 24, 1959, he was awarded the Benjamin S. Pouzzner Lodge of B'nai B'rith "Man of the Year Award" in Lowell, Massachusetts. (Previous recipients of this award have been His Eminence Cardinal Cushing, Mr. Thurgood Marshall of the NAACP, and handless war veteran Harold Russell.) Since then, numerous affiliates of B'nai B'rith in major cities across the nation have conferred significant awards of merit upon this humanitarian leader of the Episcopal Guild for the Blind. There is universal recognition of his work in teaching Hebrew and Hebrew braille to sightless persons of the Jewish faith who wish to participate actively in the liturgical service of the synagogue through the use of the Siddur, the prayer book, which has been transcribed into braille and published by the Jewish Braille Institute. A highly appreciated honor was given to him in his home town of Brooklyn on the evening of February 16, 1961, when Flatbush Lodge No. 190 of the Free Sons of Israel presented him with the "Founder Meyer Jacobs Award."

By word and deed, Father Sutcliffe reveals his affirmation and support of the efforts of the organized blind as they seek to participate in education, rehabilitation and welfare programs and to make their voices heard in the determination of these programs. He has emphasized this belief with undeniable sincerity in these words: "With every bit of conviction at my command, I say that organizations of the blind are of inestimable value. The organized blind movement must go forward because blind persons must be able to verbalize and articulate their feelings through some definite channels."

In summarizing the reasons for his own efforts on behalf of the blind, he maintains that if "work for the blind" -- a wonderful phrase which sometimes covers a multitude of sins -- is truly sincere in its wish to see blind persons integrated into the community, then the agencies and groups who represent work for the blind will not

fight the organized blind movement.

Of Father Sutcliffe it may truly be said: his creed is manifested by deed and his word is manifested by work. Even more, he is a brother to others.

A RESOLUTION ON EMPLOYMENT OF HANDICAPPED

A bold resolution urging California's state government to take the lead in setting nondiscriminatory employment standards for the handicapped -- specifically by opening state civil service jobs to all eligible applicants "regardless of apparent handicap" -- was among the progressive features of the report on "Rehabilitation Workshops for the Handicapped" recently submitted by the State Senate's Fact-Finding Committee on Governmental Administration. (For details of the report, see "California Senate Committee Hits Workshops," THE BLIND AMERICAN, March, 1963.)

The text of the committee's proposed resolution follows:

"WHEREAS, Evidence shows that:

"a. Handicapped workers perform as well as, or better than, able-bodied workers, in both quality and quantity of work produced;

"b. Handicapped workers have a lower rate of turnover;

"c. Handicapped workers have fewer lost-time accidents, although their frequency rate is slightly higher;

"d. Handicapped workers' absentee records compare favorably with those of the nonhandicapped; now, therefore, be it

"Resolved, That the State of California adopt as a portion of its personnel policy a statement recognizing government's proper role as the model employer, setting the pace and standards of enlightened personnel policies for the rest of the State; and be it further

"Resolved, That the State Personnel Board be requested to adopt regulations assuring every applicant, regardless of apparent handicap who is otherwise eligible, the right to take examinations, oral interviews, and to be considered for positions within the state civil service; and be it further

"Resolved, That this resolution be forwarded to every county, city, school district, and special district in the State, urging them to adopt similar personnel policies and procedures."

MEET THE BLIND WHO LEAD THE BLIND

(Editor's note: In recent issues THE BLIND AMERICAN has presented biographical articles on two outstanding leaders of the organized blind: Russell Kletzing, President of the National Federation of the Blind, and Kenneth Jernigan, the NFB's First Vice President. Meanwhile, the National Federation has published [January 1963] a revised edition of its official publication, "Who Are the Blind Who Lead the Blind?" which contains the biographies of all present officers and board members. As part of our policy of acquainting readers with prominent personalities in the field of work with the blind, we shall reprint the biographical sketches of other NFB leaders in this and subsequent issues. Below are the "profiles" of Donald Capps, Second Vice President; Franklin VanVliet, Treasurer, and Mrs. Eulassee Hardenbergh, Secretary.)

DONALD C. CAPPS

Second Vice President

Few more compelling examples of personal independence and social contribution could be found among blind Americans than that of the NFB's second vice president, Donald C. Capps of Columbia, South Carolina. Past president of the South Carolina Aurora Club of the Blind (1956-1960), he has served since 1960 as first vice president of the state organization, which is an affiliate of the National Federation. Capps was elected to his present NFB office in 1959, re-elected in 1960 for a two-year term, and again returned to office in 1962.

Born in 1928, Capps did not become legally blind until 1954, although he possessed a congenital eye defect. He attended the South Carolina School for the Blind and later its public schools. Following his graduation from high school he immediately enrolled in Draughon's Business College in Columbia; and upon receiving his business diploma he joined the Colonial Life and Accident Insurance Company of Columbia as a claims examiner trainee. He is presently in his sixteenth year with the insurance firm, and for the past ten years has held the responsible position of assistant manager of the claims department -- a post which requires the supervision of nine employees and his personal processing of some 15,000 claims each year, totalling well over a million dollars.

Capps first became interested in the organized blind movement in 1953, and by the following year had been elected president of the Columbia chapter of the Aurora Club, which he headed for two years before assuming the leadership of the state organization. The extent of his contribution may be measured by the success of the Aurora Club's legislative program since its inception in 1956. During the following six years the organization has been responsible for an increase of \$76,000 in the state's appropriation for cash assistance to the needy blind -- an advance which was won over the strenuous opposition of the state public welfare officials. Among other improvements, Capps' organization has achieved an extra exemption on state income tax and an amendment to the South Carolina vending stand law making the blind priority in employment mandatory rather than merely permissive.

Capps' energies as a leader have not been confined to the performance of his official duties, productive and time-consuming as they are. Among other activities he is editor of the PALMETTO AURORAN, the excellent quarterly publication of the Aurora Club whose articles are frequently reprinted in national journals for the blind. In 1960 Capps directed a campaign which led to construction of the Columbia chapter's \$35,000 education and training center; he now serves as executive director and chairman of the board of trustees of the flourishing Aurora Center. In this role he has been instrumental in setting up a braille switchboard training facility and laying plans for its full-time operation. In addition, Capps has served for eight years as the very successful fund-raising chairman of the Columbia chapter.

The role which Capps has played in the organized blind movement of his state, as well as of the nation, is aptly symbolized by the "Donald C. Capps Award," a cash gift presented annually to

an outstanding blind Carolinian. The Capps Award was created in 1961 by Ways and Means for the Blind of Augusta, Georgia, whose president is Hubert E. Smith.

* * * * *

FRANKLIN VAN VLIET

Treasurer

Dairy farmer, musician, independent businessman, electronics technician, Sunday-school teacher, radio operator, politician -- and Federation treasurer -- these are only a few of the manifold activities met and mastered during the active career of Franklin VanVliet of Concord, New Hampshire. In addition to his leadership role in the National Federation, he is president of the New Hampshire Federation of the Blind, an office to which he has been elected and re-elected through three successive ballotings since 1958.

Born into a small New Hampshire farming community in 1922, VanVliet lost the sight of one eye as the result of an accident at the age of seven, and gradually lost his remaining vision over the next decade through sympathetic ophthalmia. By an irony of fate, his father was for many years state supervisor of services to the blind. Franklin completed elementary schooling at Massachusetts' Perkins School for the Blind; but the death of his father forced him to leave high school and go to work as boy-of-all-trades on a dairy farm.

After two years VanVliet left the farm for an industrial job with the state-operated workshop in Concord, New Hampshire. He next found employment in the field of his greatest interest, electronics, with a Manchester firm producing wartime technical equipment for the Navy. Following the war, falling victim to the mass layoffs of industry, he took a job as parts manager with the state highway department.

A lifelong desire to operate his own business was realized for VanVliet in 1952, when he opened a shop specializing in manufacture and sale of various types of automotive upholstery and equipment. Although the business was on the way to a flourishing success, it later came up against unbeatable competition from a large chain store which entered the local field. Forced to lay off his help and close his doors, VanVliet chose to turn adversity into new opportunity -- by returning

to school to master the intricate science of electronics. He attended the Radio Engineering Institute of Omaha, Nebraska, graduating in 1955 with a radio technician's diploma, and returned to Concord where he has since made a successful career as an electronics specialist.

Besides his major concentration on the sales and installation of electronic organs and master antenna systems, VanVliet holds a commercial radio operator's license and is currently engaged in a program of self-training in microwave transmission in order to broaden his already wide field of competence. Something of the variety of his skills is illustrated by a recent undertaking in which he prepared the blueprints and supervised the entire construction of a 500-seat tabernacle in Maine.

Married in 1946 to Miss Gertrude Goodwin, the NFB's indefatigable treasurer today divides his "free" time between Sunday-school teaching, church organ-playing, and a vigorous outdoor life centering around VanVliet's summer cabin. In 1958 he campaigned unsuccessfully for the Concord office of alderman, and now has thoughts of running for a state position once held by his father -- that of Representative to the General Court.

* * * * *

EULASEE S. HARDENBERGH

Secretary

Eulasee S. (Mrs. Gordon) Hardenbergh of Birmingham, Alabama, brings to her position as the NFB's secretary a decade of active experience in the organized blind movement of her state and nation. Elected to the presidency of the Alabama Federation of the Blind in 1956, she has been re-elected in each year thereafter -- concrete testimony to her dynamic leadership in securing needed legislation and promoting the welfare of the state's blind population. On the national level, she was chosen by the NFB in 1960 for a position on its Board of Directors, and two years later won election to her present executive post.

Born in Columbiana, Alabama, Mrs. Hardenbergh was attending high school in Birmingham when she lost her sight and was forced to transfer to the Alabama School for the Blind at Talledega. In 1930 she was married, and has one son who is today a practicing ophthalmologist.

A past president of the Alabama Federation's Birmingham chapter, Mrs. Hardenbergh continues to serve as White Cane Chairman for the western section of Birmingham County, as well as of the county's White Cane Scholarship Committee which has established two scholarships for blind children of the area.

In 1959 Mrs. Hardenbergh was one of 21 witnesses chosen by the National Federation of the Blind to testify before a committee of Congress holding hearings on legislation to protect the right of the blind to organize. Recently nominated as "woman of the year" by the Emblem Club of Ensley (Birmingham), she also served as chairman for Alabama of the Helen Keller 80th Birthday Committee.

A CONSTRUCTIVE DISSENT

By Dr. Floyd W. Matson

(Editor's note: The following talk by the editor of THE BLIND AMERICAN was delivered on April 10, 1963, in the course of a program on social issues -- entitled "Dissent" -- broadcast by San Francisco's educational television station, KQED.)

My dissent is both an accusation and a defense. What I wish to defend is the institution of public welfare -- its philosophy, its programs, and the spirit of its laws. And what I shall accuse is the rising anti-welfare movement which now reaches across the nation, from Newburgh in New York to Alameda County in California -- and which threatens the security of our society because it is aimed at the heart of our social security.

This movement bespeaks a counter-revolution in social thought -- a revolution of nihilism -- whose purpose is nothing less than to roll back and nullify the progressive advance of conscience and responsibility which has culminated in our modern philosophy and law of welfare.

For the modern law of welfare this movement would substitute the ancient law of crime and punishment. Like its shadowy companions

of the Minutemen, the book-burners, and the Rod-and-Birch societies, it seeks to whip down the needs of the defenseless and disadvantaged as it whips up the fears of the comfortable. It begins with a clean-up, but ends in a crackdown. It brings to the community and the nation not peace but a sword.

The secret password of this movement is: "When you hear the word 'welfare', reach for your revolver."

Do I exaggerate? Look at the record. In counties up and down our state -- among them those of Alameda and Santa Clara -- night raids have been launched against the homes of welfare recipients -- mass raids involving hundreds of families instigated without warning and without specific cause -- dawn patrols manned by reluctant social workers who have been drafted into the forced march on pain of dismissal. (You may remember the blind case worker over in Oakland who was fired a couple of months ago for refusing to join such a raiding party.) All this for the announced purpose of flushing male companions from the homes of mothers whose needy children were receiving aid. And if the men were found, as a few were -- why, then the children were punished, by taking the food from their mouths.

Others of our counties have practiced other methods of dealing with those citizens poor enough, weak enough, or downright mean enough to seek help from their community. Among these devices is the lie detector, used on the assumption that the applicant for public aid must be a cheat . . . the blood test to establish the parentage of children needing help . . . the injunction to welfare mothers that they must work or be jailed, regardless of the state of their health or the need of the children for their presence . . . and, of course, the routine police precautions (common in the annals of crime and rascality) of mugging and fingerprinting those who venture to apply for public assistance.

Other punishments, much more cruel than these, are not unusual in our state. There isn't time to enumerate them all -- the coercions and threats, the arbitrary discontinuance of essential aid, the contemptuous disregard of every right, immunity and privilege of citizenship once thought to be secured by constitutional sanction.

But one more illustration. A county district attorney in our fair state has publicly urged the sterilization of welfare mothers who continue to bear illegitimate children, as well as of fathers of more than one family who show unwillingness to support them. And

this same Good Samaritan has even speculated aloud that it might be well if the legislature would give some thought to the application of euthanasia in such cases. Dare we assume that the D. A. did not mean what he said?

I trust this is enough by way of illustration to make my point, which is that the new and humane law of social welfare -- a law based on faith in human beings as well as on hope and charity toward them -- is in process of being invaded and ravaged by another and alien law: the oldest law of all, the law of crimes, which is founded not on faith but on suspicion, not on hope but on contempt, not on charity but on retaliation and revenge.

The test of any modern civilization, the final measure of its quality, is not how it treats the comfortable majority but rather how it treats the uncomfortable minorities among its citizens -- and not only the minorities of color but all the minorities of underprivilege and deprivation, of misfortune and disability. "For whatsoever thou doest unto the least of these, thou doest even so unto me."

The measure of a civilization, then, is not to be found in its quantity of things but in its quality of mercy. And to mercy may be added something more: opportunity. For what the vast majority of those in need most urgently require is simply opportunity -- the chance to get off the precarious margins of society and into its mainstream, to be integrated and assimilated and independent.

If this is our commitment, we must end once and for all the guilty and barbaric practice of punishing the poor for their poverty; of cursing the meek for their lack of spirit; of accusing the lame because they are not upright; the halt because they have been immobilized -- and the blind for their inexcusable failure of vision.

By all means let us eliminate the vestiges of fraud that do exist in our welfare system. Let us get rid of the few chiselers, as we do in any other activity. But let's not throw out the baby of welfare with this dirty bathwater. Let us remember that that is in truth what welfare is -- an infant -- a tender, novel, dependent and delicate spirit born of the meeting of Christian charity with democratic equalitarianism. And if we do not take steps to save it, that child will surely die from the beating it has absorbed -- or else it will be turned into a monster, at the hands of monsters.

THE HANDICAPPED IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

By K. Vernon Banta

(Editor's note: Mr. Banta retired on April 1, 1963, from his position as Deputy Executive Secretary of the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped, a post he had held since 1949. He was recently honored by the National Rehabilitation Association as recipient of the W. F. Faulkes Award -- presented to him as the "guiding force of a bold new nationwide program to make the public buildings of America fully accessible to handicapped citizens everywhere," as well as for his development of selective placement techniques for handicapped workers in industry and the public service. The abridged article which follows was first presented as an address at the annual conference of the Public Personnel Association, November 15, 1962.)

Twelve years ago the Public Service Committee of the President's Committee was organized with Edward L. Cushman and Ken Warner serving as chairman and vice-chairman, respectively. In that period, great changes have taken place in the policies and practices of hiring authorities in all areas of government -- Federal, State and local -- dealing with employment of the handicapped. These changes affecting the handicapped have without doubt influenced changes in attitudes and practices in dealing with other groups of our labor force.

It is significant to repeat that the program of the Public Service Committee -- and of course that of the President's Committee -- has been based upon the principle of equality of opportunity. Special preferences have had no place in the proposals of the Committee or the Recommended Policy which was the first tool developed for the program. We hear much today about "discrimination." It is not our plan to practice discrimination by preference.

Fair competition in the labor market is the right of every qualified job applicant. Fair competition is what we seek for the handicapped in the public service. Fair competition is denied the job seeker who must pass a hurdle unrelated to job performance or job safety, or to pass an examination used solely as a screen to reduce the number of competitors, or take a test in which his physical limitations preclude a fair trial....

Early in 1951 -- eleven years ago -- a Recommended Policy for employment of the handicapped for the guidance of public administrators was developed by the Public Service Committee. This was not the brain child of a single staff member but was thoroughly analyzed, reviewed, and revised by many experts in public administration. Many personnel officers had an opportunity to look it over and to influence the final copy.

Details of the Policy have been changed as experience taught us, but the basic principles have remained the same. The first version was released by the White House on August 28, 1954, and became the first positive policy statement issued in the Executive Branch of the Federal Government for the guidance of the U. S. Civil Service Commission, the heads of the Federal Departments and Agencies, and all hiring authorities in the Federal Government service.

In an effort to implement more effectively the Policy in everyday hiring practice, and to equalize opportunity in application, examination, certification, and consideration, the Federal Departments and Agencies were directed in 1957 to designate one top personnel staff member to serve as a coordinator for the handicapped. Coordinators were also to be named for bureaus and divisions and other organizational units to serve a similar purpose.

The coordinators are assigned responsibility for interviewing job candidates who are handicapped and to give special consideration to insure full opportunity to compete for existing or future job vacancies.

Coordinators for the handicapped were also directed to give special attention to employees who acquire disabilities to employees who acquire disabilities on or off the job to be certain that full consideration is given in rehabilitation, reassignment, transfer, or disability retirement. We are told that over 3,000 coordinators have now been named in all the establishments of the Federal Government over the Nation.

Success of the coordinator program probably rests first, upon the extent to which the policy has been accepted by all officials in the hiring chain, and second, to the extent to which the coordinator understands and accepts his responsibilities. However, the overriding condition promising success or failure is the extent to which the department or agency head has made the policy his policy and has lent the weight of his authority to implementation.

In the Federal Government, it is probably safe to say that equal opportunity in employment of the handicapped will vary from section to section, from division to division, from bureau to bureau and, lastly, from agency to agency. Some departments have made an outstanding record. A few probably have unenviable records. The statistics for all departments and agencies are available but statistics tell only part of the story. It is possible to build up a striking record in figures but when the individual appointments are noted the figures are not so noteworthy.

It is fair to say that the Federal Government generally has done an outstanding job in the past two decades in revising a tight physical standard policy and practice to give greater opportunity for the handicapped in Federal employment. Obstacles still exist which will need to be exposed and corrected before equal opportunity is a fact for all types of handicapped workers.

No survey of accomplishments in the State governments has been made since the one reported in 1960. However, we are learning that increasing numbers of the States have adopted the Recommended Policy usually without change. Some of the States like New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania have, also, adopted procedures which provide for cooperation by State vocational rehabilitation and employment service agencies in determining suitability of the positions and the physical capabilities of the job applicants. Reports indicate this procedure has worked out very well.

A very few States have established some preferences for the handicapped. In the case of disabled veterans this policy has been accepted generally in both Federal and State jurisdictions as a fair practice in view of sacrifices made in the defense of our Nation. The Congress of the United States and the legislative bodies of many States and local governing bodies have made it the policy of their jurisdictions, and we have no quarrel with those policies. However, as previously stated, the Public Service Committee has not recommended preferential treatment for other handicapped except as special services may be needed in order to offset the handicap imposed by disability. Equal opportunity would be meaningless without compensating considerations.

The municipal administrator has not been as easy to reach as State administrative heads. Probably that is the reason we have a dearth of information relative to progress in this area of the public service. But we do know of several city and county governments

that have developed outstanding programs.

It was my privilege a year or so ago to visit the Departments of Personnel in Los Angeles city and county and in the city of San Francisco. The programs in Los Angeles were especially interesting and bear investigation by jurisdictions planning changes in physical standards. Both administrators are making continuous reviews to correct, expand and revise procedures and practices to improve services. The system in San Francisco, while not so far along as in the sister city of Los Angeles, is rapidly developing and promises to be another example of good public personnel practice....

The public school systems are another area of government service which are a concern of the Public Service Committee. While the attitudes, fears, and policies have not always been so deep-seated as some other jurisdictions, the dispersion of authority and responsibility make reaching all hiring officials a much more complex and difficult problem. But we believe through the actions of the Public Service Committee and the cooperating agencies, organizations, and individuals, considerable results have already been accomplished. The President's Committee's writing contest has done much to stimulate interest among educators. A brochure, prepared and released by the Committee, addressed to school administrators, has reached a high percentage of school people and we believe has had much influence in changing attitudes and policies.

In higher education some colleges and universities -- notably the University of Illinois -- have adopted policies of admitting severely handicapped students who have a good potential for professional vocations. A principal barrier which has excluded many good student prospects are built-in architectural features of buildings and other structures -- steps, stairways, and narrow doorways -- which the physically handicapped, particularly those in wheelchairs, cannot overcome. The University of Illinois through an extensive ramp-building program has solved this problem to the advantage of all students....

Not all the barriers which screen out the handicapped in our public school systems can be attributed to the prejudices or lack of understanding of school administrators. A few jurisdictions are saddled with restrictive regulations and laws which must be repealed or amended to remove unrealistic and unnecessary requirement. The NEW YORK TIMES recently ran a story about the New York City Department of Education regulations. The article stated that

physical standards ruled out women less than 58 inches and men less than 60 inches tall; teachers who have less than 20/30 vision in the worse eye, with or without glasses, as are all teachers who have arm disabilities, or use crutches or wheelchairs or hearing aids. Through the representations of the New York Governor's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped and other groups in the city, an ad hoc committee has been named to take a look at the policies and revise them -- not downward but outward -- to admit the well-qualified with and without disabilities.

In summary, there have been gradual but significant changes in the policies and practices of placement officers in employing the handicapped at all levels of Government -- Federal, State, and local. These changes have not adversely affected production nor have personnel benefits, wage rates, and other considerations in employment been adversely affected. It is our modest claim that the actions of the Public Service Committee have had some influence in the changes which have taken place.

MICHIGAN SEMINAR FOR BLIND TUNERS

By Stanley Oliver

(Editor's note: Mr. Oliver is a member of the board and legislative chairman of the Michigan Council of the Blind, and serves as editor of the Council's braille and print magazine, THE EYE-OPENER. He is also a member of the executive committee of the National Federation of the Blind.)

The Michigan Association of Workers for the Blind, under the leadership of President Jack Chard, is pleased to announce the organization of a comprehensive seminar for active blind piano tuners, from June 17 through June 21. The seminar will be held at the Michigan School for the Blind -- several acres of beautiful grounds and buildings located in Lansing, the state capitol. School superintendent Dr. Robert Thompson extends a hearty welcome to every visitor. Dr. Thompson is a former national president of the American Association of

Instructors for the Blind, and now serves on the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind; he is one of the most inspiring figures in the field of special education, and we are glad to have Bob on hand throughout the seminar.

Costs of board and lodging for the entire period will be fifteen dollars. New buildings and equipment make the facilities one of the most modern in the nation. Among the features accessible for spare-time recreation are: several bowling alleys, elaborate swimming pool, extensive physical fitness gym equipment, and accoustically treated gym with a "sound fence" for safe roller skating, etc. There will be ample guide service if needed. If it is necessary for you to bring along your spouse, a similar charge will be added.

Subjects covered will include tuning pointers from our factory speedsters, illustration and comment from those working with concert artists, trouble-shooting and work techniques, factors important to organizing small business, restoration and regulation of grands and spinets, professional language, poise and ethics, along with technical question-answer sessions daily.

Sessions will be held mornings, afternoons, and evenings, with program talks in the evening. Among instructors will be leading personnel from three piano factories in Michigan, plus Michigan State University and Wayne University. Irwin Otto of New York, leading personality in seminar work of the Piano Technician's Guild, Sid Durfee of Perkins Institute, and Everett Oddie of the Braille Piano Technicians, have expressed their willingness to make this program helpful.

If you wish to attend, please write at once to Jesse Manley, Tuning Department, Michigan School for the Blind, 715 W. Willow Street, Lansing, Michigan. Include your pre-payment check for board and lodging. A fully detailed schedule of sessions and directors is now being worked up and will be forwarded as soon as completed to registrants. Here is a golden opportunity to expand technical know-how in the pleasant surroundings of a top-flight educational institution.

BROTHERS . . . & OTHERS

Connecticut Blind Convene. William Hogan was re-elected president of the Connecticut Federation of the Blind at the organization's annual convention on March 31. Other officers chosen were George Cone, Vice President; Jane Virgulto, Secretary; Stanley Virgulto, Treasurer; Henry Iestas, Legislative Chairman; John Standish and George Cone as board members. Bill Hogan was elected to head the group's delegation to the national convention this year, with Stanley Virgulto and George Cone as alternate delegates. In other convention action, the C.F.B. voted to send a contribution of ten dollars to THE BLIND AMERICAN as a gesture of support for the magazine's work on behalf of the blind. (The contribution is hereby gratefully acknowledged.)

* * * * *

Iowa Association to Meet. The Iowa Association of the Blind will hold its annual convention June 7 through June 9 at the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School, according to information from IAB President William Klontz. Rates are set at \$2.25 per day. Ray Dinsmore, President of the Indiana Federation of the Blind, will be a principal speaker at the Saturday morning session. Other speakers will include Kenneth Jernigan, director of the Iowa Commission for the Blind and first vice-president of the N.F.B.; Lee Iverson, superintendent of the Iowa School, and Don Walker, the school's principal. The banquet on Saturday evening will be held at the Vinton Legion Hall, featuring Dr. Walter Stromer as chief speaker. Banquet tickets will be \$1.50 per person.

* * * * *

The National Church Conference of the Blind will be held July 22-25 at the Kentucky Hotel in Louisville. Rates will be \$6.00 per day for single rooms, \$9.00 for double rooms and \$10.00 for twin beds. An inspirational program is reportedly being planned by Conference officials.

* * * * *

Jim Fall Publicized. James Fall, President of the Arizona Federation of the Blind, was the subject of a recent feature story in the Phoenix, Arizona, GAZETTE. In addition to his Federation

activity, Fall is also on the boards of the Phoenix Blind Center and the Maple Leaf Lions Club.

A high-school English and History teacher when his sight began to fail in the early 1930's, Jim subsequently went into dairy farming in Kansas and dirt farming in Missouri, the newspaper reported. Later he and his wife Maurine moved to Brownsville, Texas, where he operated a vending stand.

The Falls moved to Phoenix five years ago, where Jim became president of the local Zenith Club of the Blind and is today a Sunday school teacher and class president at the local Baptist Church. Now 60, Jim was said to be working on the government fallout shelter project provided for the blind of the state some months ago.

In his "spare" time, Fall reportedly does the housework in his home, as well as the cooking for his wife, who is almost bed-ridden with rheumatoid arthritis.

* * * * *

Nagle Named to D. C. Advisory Council. John F. Nagle, chief of the Washington Office of the National Federation of the Blind, has been appointed to the District of Columbia's Advisory Council on Vocational Rehabilitation. The action was taken in mid-March by the District Board of Commissioners, on the recommendation of Norman W. Pierson, director of the D. C. Department of Vocational Rehabilitation.

* * * * *

Israeli Training Experiment. A pioneer experiment in vocational training of blind persons for industrial employment is underway in Israel, according to an article in the April (1963) issue of THE NEW OUTLOOK. A textile institute of the national Organization for Rehabilitation Through Training has been putting into effect methods of rehabilitation introduced by agents of the U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (Office of Vocational Rehabilitation) -- with such success that the 30 blind graduates of the program are now at work in the nation's textile industry as winding machine operators.

"There already is an indication that the productive output of the blind graduate equals that of the sighted worker in industry, both

in quality and quantity," writes Yehuda Schiff, deputy director of the Service for the Blind of Israel's Ministry of Social Welfare. Some twenty more blind students are currently undergoing training at the ORT institute.

The article points out that there are about 5,000 blind persons in Israel, 87 percent of whom are newcomers from over fifty countries in Asia and Africa. An unusual statistic is that 60 percent of the nation's blind population is of working age, as opposed to an estimated 15 or 20 percent in the countries of Europe and America.

* * * * *

"Fight for Mobility." The foregoing is the title of a 16mm. sound film produced as a public service by Philadelphia station WRCV-TV in cooperation with The Seeing Eye, Inc., of New Jersey. The film depicts the importance of mobility to blind persons. Three methods by which movement is commonly augmented are demonstrated in the moving picture -- those of the long cane, the dog guide, and the electronic device.

Dr. Richard Hoover, Baltimore ophthalmologist who devised the long cane method, is interviewed in the film; and Dr. Thomas Benham, physics professor at Haverford College, discusses and shows a current model of an electric device still in the experimental stage. The picture takes the audience on a tour of The Seeing Eye guide-dog training center, and focuses on methods used in training the animals and teaching blind persons to use them as guides.

Those interested in borrowing the film are requested to contact The Seeing Eye, Office of Public Information, 9 Rockefeller Plaza, New York 20, New York.

* * * * *

AAWB Convention Set for Seattle. The 1963 convention of the American Association of Workers for the Blind will be held July 21 through July 26 at Seattle's Olympic Hotel. Theme of the meeting will be "The Challenges of Change." Among affiliated groups planning to hold special sessions during the conclave are the Western Conference of Home Teachers and the States Council of Agencies for the Blind. Chairman of the program is Miss Marjorie Hooper, AAWB president-elect. Louis Rives, corporate secretary, is co-chairman for the affair; and Fuller Hale, executive director of the Seattle

Social Center for the Blind, has been designated chairman of the host committee.

* * * * *

Social Security Clients Mount. More than one and a half million persons -- men, women and children -- were added to the social security benefit rolls in fiscal 1962, and benefit payments rose 1.8 billion over the previous year, according to the latest annual report submitted to Congress by the Board of Trustees of the two social security trust funds.

Robert M. Ball, Commissioner of Social Security and secretary of the Board of Trustees, has announced that about half the increase of 1-1/2 million in the number of social security beneficiaries was attributable to 1960 and 1961 amendments to the law. About 723,000 persons were awarded benefits under the 1961 amendments making monthly benefits payable to men 62-64 and to their dependents, and an additional 169,000 were awarded payments as a result of provisions in the 1960 and 1961 amendments which reduced the amount of work needed to qualify for payments.

* * * * *

Peter Salmon Weds. Peter J. Salmon, veteran executive director of the Brooklyn Industrial Home for the Blind, was married last December to Lilyan Webel Banta, who is administrative secretary to the executive director, according to an item in THE NEW OUTLOOK. Salmon also recently celebrated his fortieth anniversary with the Brooklyn workshop.

* * * * *

Phoenix Blind Leader Hailed. Margaret Pekarek, newly chosen president of the Phoenix (Arizona) Zenith Club of the Blind, was the subject of a feature article published on April 5 in the Phoenix newspaper, THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC.

After losing her sight a year and a half ago, Miss Pekarek "learned braille, learned how to type 55 words a minute, taught herself how to iron (something she had never done when she was sighted), and joined the Zenith Club for the Blind," the story pointed out.

"Then she set about helping other newly-blinded. She visits

the lonely at Little Sisters for the Poor, typing letters for them; worked with James Fall, president of the Arizona Federation of the Blind, on a brochure to be given new drivers to explain the White Cane law; and took on the chairmanship of a May 3 concert starring blind musicians . . . She learned to knit, do leather work, and even archery (she can hit the target 11 times in 12 tries)."

* * * * *

Ved Mehta Narrates Adventures. The well-known blind East Indian writer, Ved Mehta, is the author of a two-part essay humorously relating his educational and social experiences which appeared in THE NEW YORKER, December 8 and 15, 1962. Mehta, who was educated at the Arkansas School for the Blind and at the University of California, as well as in India, subsequently continued his "search for historical truth" for three years at Oxford University in England. The present articles tell of his encounters with famous historians and scholars, among them Arnold Toynbee, R. H. Tawney and Sir Lewis Namier.

* * * * *

Social Welfare Conference Meets. The National Conference on Social Welfare is scheduled for Cleveland, Ohio, the week beginning May 19, with business and social activities to be centered on the theme "We the People . . . promote the general welfare." Prominent among conference speakers will be Chester A. Bowles, presently a special assistant to President Kennedy; Walter Barlow, president of Public Opinion Research Center, Princeton, and Dr. Ellen Winston, newly appointed U. S. Commissioner of Welfare. Anthony Celebrezze, Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, will climax the sessions with an address to the group on the final morning, May 24.

* * * * *

Asian Conference on Blind Work. Delegates from 19 Asian countries will assemble in Singapore on May 19 and then proceed to Kuala Lumpur, Malaya, for the Second Asian Conference on Work for the Blind, according to an announcement in THE NEW OUTLOOK. The above date represents a postponement of the original conference schedule, reportedly made necessary by the delayed opening of Malaya's parliament. The Conference is under the joint sponsorship of the American Foundation for Overseas Blind, the Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind, and the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind, in cooperation with the Malayan government.

)

)

)

)